

Statement of Support from Amici New York State Council of Churches

The Governing Board (Executive Committee) of the New York State Council of Churches has given its unanimous approval to serve as an Amici. The Council, which has been in existence since the late 19th Century, is comprised of eight denominations (American Baptist, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quaker), Lutheran Church of America, Presbyterian, U.S.A., United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church) and approximately 7,000 congregations from those denominations in every part of New York State.

The New York State Council of Churches states in its constitution that “It’s fitting that Christians should manifest their unity by joining together to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and to show God’s good and just purposes throughout New York State. Therefore, we covenant to care for one another, safeguard the presence of vital Christian communities, provide hospitality to all, proclaim the gospel boldly in each place, and declare God’s just will among the powers and principalities.”

Given our mission, we have a compelling interest to serve as Amici to protect the free speech of our congregations and its lay and clergy leaders that they may freely exercise their first amendment rights to welcome the stranger, advocate for marginalized and vulnerable people and seek their welfare. Such advocacy is central to our goal to offer the good news of the Gospel in word and deed in a broken world and to offering effective pastoral care to our congregants and those in the society as a whole. All of our denominations have well developed theological positions to advocate for immigrants who have, over the years, been subjected to discrimination and marginalization. We have advocated for government policies and laws which prevent this discrimination and allow for human flourishing. We are deeply grieved by the poor treatment of Ravi Ragbir and many immigrants like him, by Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE). The prospect of the Government intimidating and discriminating against our congregants and their lay and clergy leaders infringes on our ability to offer the good news of the Gospel through advocating for the poor, the vulnerable and the stranger in our midst.

The Reverend Peter Cook, Executive Director
The Reverend Dustin Wright, President